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US-based Ginkgo Biosecurity launches pathogen monitoring centre in Doha

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A first of its-kind collection and analysis centre for data gathered through Ginkgo's pathogen monitoring network



US-based Ginkgo Bioworks, which is building the leading platform for cell programming and biosecurity, has announced the signing of an agreement with Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZ) and Doha Venture Capital (DVC) to build the first Centre for Unified Biosecurity Excellence in Doha (CUBE-D) within Qatar Free Zones.

The signing took place alongside QFZ's and DVC's participation in the Web Summit Qatar, in a ceremony attended by Dr Ahmad Al-Sayed, Minister of State and Chairman of QFZ/DVC, Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and Vice Chairman of QFZ/DVC, and Matthew McKnight, General Manager for Biosecurity, Ginkgo Bioworks, along with executives from the ministry and the three signing entities.

CUBE-D's advanced platform is expected to serve as a nucleus for global pathogen monitoring efforts and be a key hub in Ginkgo's bioradar network. Supporting global programmes modeled in part after the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Traveler Genomic Surveillance (TGS) programme, which tracks and analyses pathogens collected at seven international airports in the US, CUBE-D will be a foundational piece of biosecurity and health security infrastructure in Ginkgo's multi-continent, integrated early warning system for biological threats.

CUBE-D plans to support analysis of data collected from pathogen monitoring stations in both Qatar and partner countries, such as airports, municipalities, and agricultural sites by leveraging cutting-edge analytical platforms powered by artificial intelligence and developed by Ginkgo. Environmental and other anonymous, non-clinical samples will be regularly scanned for signals of emerging outbreaks, offering insight into how pathogens travel and evolve and building detection capabilities for natural, accidental, or intentional biothreats.